



CITY OF DURHAM
Department of Water Management
101 CITY HALL PLAZA
DURHAM, NC 27701

News Release

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Smoke Testing Set to Take Place in Downtown Durham

Non-Toxic, Non-Fire Hazard Vapor Helps Identify Defects in Sanitary Sewer System

DURHAM, N.C. — As part of routine efforts to identify and repair potential sanitary sewer system defects, the City of Durham Department of Water Management will begin smoke testing of sewer lines in areas of downtown. This work is expected to begin the week of October 2. Please note – this smoke is non-toxic and does not leave stains or residue. It is comparable to substances more commonly used in fog machines for entertainment purposes. It appears white to gray in color and has a slight fragrance. It is **NOT** a fire hazard.

The process involves forcing smoke into a gravity sewer line via manhole using an air blower. If there are any holes, cracks, or other defects in the sewer line, smoke could seep through and assist to visually identify the problem area. Smoke could appear at any point in the system where there is an open break in the line, such as storm drains, sewer cleanouts, manholes, and roof vents. Smoke may also escape through homes, offices, yards, or anywhere poor plumbing exists. Smoke entering a home or building during this testing may indicate a problem with the plumbing. The City is not responsible for plumbing located on private property.

Water Management has partnered with Kimley-Horn and Hydrostructures to perform the testing in downtown Durham. Hydrostructures recommends pouring a gallon of water into sinks, tubs, and floor drains not subject to everyday use. This will fill p-traps and help prevent smoke from entering the building. Occupants do not have to be present at home or at work during testing.

If you have concern before or during the testing, please contact Kimley-Horn's Nolan Raney at (919) 653-6625 or Nolan.Raney@Kimley-Horn.com. For other questions about this project, please contact the Department of Water Management's Bryant Green at (919) 560-4381 ext. 35268 or

Bryant.Green@DurhamNC.gov. General information about active Water Management projects is available online at durhamwaterprojects.org.

About the Department of Water Management

The Department of Water Management is responsible for the operation and maintenance of Durham's water supply, water treatment and water reclamation (wastewater treatment) facilities, the collection and distribution systems (including meter reading), and customer billing services. The department has a wide variety of support divisions and programs to maintain the existing infrastructure that provide these integral services, and strives to be a responsible steward of the City's physical assets. For information, visit <http://durhamnc.gov/944/>, like [Durham Saves Water](#) on Facebook, and follow [@DurhamWater](#) on Twitter.

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